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The University of Georgia

Office of the President

September 7, 2006

The Honorable Tom Coburn, MD
Chairman, Subcommittee on Federal
Financial Management, Government
Information and International Security
439 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator Coburn:

I am pleased to respond to your July 27, 2006 letter requesting information regarding federal appropriations received by the University of Georgia (UGA) since 2000. Your interest in how UGA is involved in university-based research funded by the federal government is appreciated.

As you recognize in your letter, research universities have played an important role in scientific advancements aimed at improving the health and well-being of our citizens. UGA is rightfully proud of the hard work and achievements of our outstanding faculty in a broad array of academic disciplines, resulting in national and international recognition as well as perennially ranking in the National Science Foundation's Top 100 Institutions in federally financed R&D.

UGA's research enterprise has now surpassed $300 million annually in R&D expenditures. We leverage investments from the State of Georgia, competitive federal research awards, corporate sponsored research, congressionally directed appropriations, (i.e., earmarks) and our own internal funds. Only a very small portion of the total R&D comes from the directed congressional funding, though the funds we have received through working with our Georgia Congressional delegation have been very important.

The federal government is the primary source of funds for scientific research. The importance of Congress' role in setting federal research policies and priorities and in defining the amount and type of research funding made available to America's research universities cannot be overstated. For example, Congress responded several years ago to the call from the medical and life sciences research community to double funding for the National Institutes of Health. Likewise, Congress has responded to more recent calls for increased funding for the National Science Foundation. Congress has also responded to urgent national needs and provided

significant increases in the research budgets for the Departments of Defense and Homeland Security.

I commend you and other Members of Congress who are engaged in the discussion about national scientific research needs. Congressional oversight of agency programs is essential to fostering greater understanding and agreement about federal priorities and building a consensus about the value, need and direction of specific federal programs. In response to your request, I have attached a list of projects funded by the federal government since 2000. In each case, the University of Georgia worked closely with our Georgia Congressional delegation to identify the need, resources and justification for an appropriation for these projects.

Each year, before taking any funding requests to our Congressional delegation, UGA utilizes a vigorous vetting process to ensure that a project meets an important state and/or national need and that UGA has the requisite expertise to address those needs. An emphasis is placed on projects that, though meritorious, may not fit neatly within an existing federal competitive grant program. During this internal application and vetting process, UGA informs potential recipients that any directed funds are time limited and are not intended to continue indefinitely. Only a small percentage of the proposals developed by our faculty for potential submission to our Congressional delegation actually survive this vetting process and are deemed appropriate for potential directed funding from Congress.

As you know, all congressionally directed funds go to a federal agency, and then are awarded by that agency to the university through a grant, cooperative agreement or contract. In soliciting program funds, we are always mindful that ultimately we will be working with a federal agency to ensure that our projects meet programmatic objectives via clearly defined benchmarks, performance standards, and outcomes.

By way of illustration, I draw your attention to three important programs at UGA that were made possible with the help of our Georgia Congressional delegation. The first is a $10 million appropriation approved by Congress in 2001 as part of the Labor-HHS appropriations bill to honor the late Senator Paul Coverdell. After Senator Coverdell's untimely death, the Senate Majority Leader appointed a special Committee to select a way to appropriately honor the senator. The resulting recommendation was for Congress to help build a state-of-the-art biosciences research facility at the University of Georgia in honor of Senator Coverdell. The $10 million approved by Congress was augmented by $10 million from the State of Georgia and another $20 million from UGA. The end result was that former President George H.W. Bush came to campus earlier this spring to help dedicate the new Coverdell Center for Biomedical and Health Sciences. This facility houses laboratories of many distinguished life-science researchers. The physical proximity of scientists from different disciplines, facilitated by the state-of-the-art open laboratory design, is opening doors for collaborations that would never have been possible before. Scientists are collaborating on important studies of emerging and reemerging zoonotic and bio-terror infectious diseases. Others are working closely with the CDC on better communication mechanisms for disease prevention and control. Without Congress' appropriation of the first $10 million, however, this building would never have come to fruition as the living, vibrant memorial to Senator Coverdell.

The Barrier Island Research and Learning Center (BIRL), operated by UGA's Institute of Marine Sciences, is currently being completed on Sapelo Island, Georgia (near Savannah). The ever-increasing demand for facilities to support research, instruction and outreach activities on Sapelo Island was the impetus behind this $1,490,000 congressional appropriation through NOAA. These federal funds were matched by $800,000 from the State of Georgia and UGA. Sapelo, an ecological, archaeological, and cultural treasure, has extensive marshes and estuaries that account for approximately one third of all the remaining salt marsh wetlands on the Atlantic seaboard. It is a unique and irreplaceable resource for the National Estuarine Research Reserve System, and for the coastal marine sciences community nationwide. This $2.3 million renovation of the 1950's era research and dormitory facility is almost complete and, when finished, the BIRL will usher in a new century of research, instruction, and service for many students and marine scientists. The Georgia Congressional Delegation – in fact, every Member of Congress – should take pride in providing the federal funds that made this upgrade of the BIRL possible.

The last program we would like to highlight involves the Center for Mass Destruction Defense (CMADD), one of CDC's Centers for Public Preparedness, and one of UGA's points of pride. Congressional appropriations totaling $1.3 million since 2002 have supported the development of educational and training programs for medical responders who may confront chemical, biological, nuclear, radiological, or conventional weapons attack. The mission of CMADD is to reduce the casualties and social disruption in WMD events by preparing health care providers to deal with the unique and unprecedented circumstances that would accompany such an attack. The model educational programs developed by CMADD scientists, along with their partners at the Medical College of Georgia and the University of Texas Southwestern-Dallas, utilize training videos, live exercises, computer simulation, and "live agent" exercises. This is the first university-affiliated program in the nation to employ the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) model for the simulation of mass casualty distribution.

As a physician, you undoubtedly appreciate the importance of CMADD's innovative work. The American Medical Association's (AMA) National Disaster Life Support Education Committee certainly has; it adopted CMADD's emergency medicine curricula for national rollout in all 50 states. During its development, the CMADD curricula received input from the CDC, the U.S. Surgeon General's Office, the Department of Homeland Security, and more than 4,000 physicians, nurses, and emergency medical technicians nationwide. This very successful program would not have been possible without the support of our Georgia Congressional delegation in the appropriations process. Importantly, after receiving this initial seed funding, CMADD now continues its important work by successfully competing for funds from both private and government sources.

In response to your inquiry regarding standards for achieving quality outcomes for projects receiving federal assistance, performance standards for each project are expressly delineated in the proposal submitted to the appropriate federal agency. Moreover, UGA applies the same rigorous standards to all proposals emanating from the institution, whether proposals go through competitive peer review processes or whether they go through an agency at the direction of Congress. Like you, we believe that American citizens and taxpayers expect no less. It is

imperative that all externally supported projects contain well conceived plans for evaluation and accountability. Thus, we strive to ensure that the quality of all our proposals is above reproach.

UGA has not adopted a formal policy regarding Congressional appropriations. We often partner and collaborate with other universities whenever such efforts can enhance the quality of a research project. Indeed, many of our federal research initiatives, whether pursuant to competitive requests or direct Congressional appropriations, are done in concert with other universities and other congressional delegations.

For the past 20 years, UGA has retained an outside firm with offices in Washington, D.C. to assist us with a variety of issues germane to our teaching, research, and service missions. As a premiere land grant and research institution, UGA has seen the value in having a firm serve as our "on the ground" representative in Washington regarding a full array of matters in our federal affairs agenda, including serving as a liaison with members of Congress and officials in government agencies, assisting us on matters related to federal higher education policy, organizing meetings for UGA personnel in Washington, assisting with the placements of student interns in the Washington, providing frequent reports on federal agency programs and legislative initiatives, working with us on the federal budgeting process, obtaining visas for students and foreign employees, and identifying new federal competitive programs that are in line with our educational and research strengths. We use the services of this firm, including several alumni of UGA at the firm, in lieu of having a full time federal affairs staff in Washington DC.

While the vast majority of federal dollars received by the UGA come from programmatic funds or competitive grants, we have found that, in certain circumstances, congressionally directed funds are of tremendous value in advancing our research and service agendas. We appreciate the opportunity to respond to your letter and hope our comments prove helpful to you and the subcommittee members as you attempt to measure the quality of research programs supported by our federal government. Should you need any further assistance from us, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Michael F. Adams

Michael F. Adams
President

MFA/gam

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA PROJECTS

FY 2001-2006
CONTAINED IN CONGRESSIONAL APPROPRIATIONS BILLS

BUILDING AND FACILITIES

Paul D. Coverdell Building for Biomedical and Health Sciences - Funding contained in the Labor-HHS appropriations - Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). This project was recommended by a special Committee established by the Senate to honor former Georgia Senator Paul Coverdell after his death in 2000. The $10 million provided by the U.S. Senate was combined with $10 million appropriated by the State of Georgia and $20 million added by the University of Georgia to construct the $40 million facility dedicated in 2006. Former President George H.W. Bush was the keynote speaker at the dedication.

FY2002 $10.0 million Construction

Barrier Island Research and Learning Center - Funding contained in the NOAA Estuarine Land Acquisition and Construction account within the Commerce-Justice-State appropriations. This funding sought by the University and the State of Georgia, supplemented $800,000 in state funds and allowed for the upgrading of research and dormitory buildings on Sapelo Island.

FY2003 $1.49 million Construction

Georgia Museum of Art - Funding was contained in the VA-HUD appropriations bill under the Economic Development Initiative account of HUD. This appropriation is to be combined with several million in state and private funds to build phase II of the Georgia Museum of Art, the museum that houses the official art collection of the State of Georgia.

FY 2005 $1.0 million Construction

PROGRAM FUNDING

Savannah River Ecology Laboratory (SREL) - At the initiation of the federal government, the SREL was established at the Savannah River Site (nuclear site) in the 1950's as an independent laboratory to provide environmental evaluation and remediation assistance to the managers of the Savannah River Site. The University of Georgia was selected to staff and manage the SREL under a cooperative agreement with the Department of Energy and commits substantial University resources each year to the operation of the SREL. Federal funding has been provided on a recurring basis by the Department of Energy, primarily through the Environmental Management (EM) programs of DOE. This funding has been approved each year by Congress in the annual Energy and Water Appropriations bill.

FY 2002	$8,000,000	
FY 2003	$7,000,000	
FY 2004	$7,776,000	(Congress approved President's budget request for SREL)
FY 2005	$7,776,000	(Congress approved President's budget request for SREL)

Center for Leadership in Education and Applied Research in Mass Destruction Defense (CLEARMADD) - This program to develop a curriculum to train medical responders in the event of mass casualty events ---nuclear, biological or chemical--- was funded under the CDC's Public Health Improvement account in the Labor-HHS appropriations bill. The curriculum was selected by the American Medical Association as a standard curriculum for national use and has been utilized in numerous states for training of medical responders.

FY 2002	$650,000
FY 2003	$450,000
FY 2004	$225,000

Biorefinery and Hydrogen Fuels Project - Partial funding for this pilot biorefinery using alternative fuels was provided through the Renewable Energy Resources account at the Department of Energy. Matching state funds are provided.

FY 2005	$1,500, 000
FY 2006	$1,250,000

Southern Black Belt Project - Funded through the Social Services and Income Maintenance Research account of the Child and Family Services Program within the Labor-HHS appropriations bill to conduct research on issues impacting low income counties and individuals across several southeastern states.

FY 2002	$250,000

Croatian Partnership for Higher Education - Funding from the Department of Education, FIPSE accounts in the Labor-HHS appropriations bill for collaborative work between UGA and the University of Zagreb.

FY 2004 $75,000

AG SPECIAL RESEARCH GRANTS - During the last six fiscal years, the University of Georgia has received approximately $14 million to support research on a variety of agricultural research topics designated for funding by the House and Senate Agriculture Appropriations bills. These research projects are often conducted in collaboration with universities in other states, with funding support for the project shared by the institutions. Once an appropriations bill is completed, project proposals are submitted to USDA and a plan of work is approved by USDA pursuant to its grant award procedures and guidelines.